

REMARKS

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

New claims 11-13 are added. Claims 12 and 13 are somewhat similar to claim 1.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-13 are currently pending.

Of these, claims 4-7 are "objected to".

II. OBJECTION TO THE SPECIFICATION

The Office Action indicates that amendments should be made to the Brief Description of the Drawings section of the specification. Therefore, the specification is amended herein as suggested by the Examiner.

The Office Action indicates that the first paragraph of the specification should be amended to disclose that the instant application is a continuation of a PCT application. Please note that an appropriate amendment to the specification was made in Item 22 of the Application Transmittal filed with the application on January 21, 2004. However, it is understood that the PTO no longer accepts amendments to the specification in an Application Transmittal, so that it is possible that the amendment in the Application Transmittal was not entered. Therefore, an additional amendment to the specification is made herein, to disclose that the instant application is a continuation of a PCT application.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the objection is overcome.

III. OBJECTION TO CLAIM 9

Claim 9 is amended to overcome the objection.

**IV. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 2, 3 AND 8 UNDER 35 USC 103
AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER GREEN IN VIEW OF PFAENDER**

Claim 1 recites "forming a phosphor layer on a surface of the supporting member". From the Examiner's comments in the Office Action, it appears that the Examiner correlates this recitation to the formation of a coating (e.g., phosphor) 300 on a micro-component 40 (shell 50) in Green. Therefore, it appears that the Examiner is of the opinion that the "supporting member" of claim 1 correlates to the micro-component 40 (shell 50) of Green.

Claim 1 further recites "inserting into the gas discharge tube the resulting phosphor layer supporting member having the phosphor layer formed thereon". From the Examiner's comments in the Office Action, it appears that the Examiner correlates this recitation to inserting (placing) a

micro-component (shell) into a socket, as disclosed, for example, in column 7, line 65, through column 8, line 1, of Green.

However, Green describes that the micro-component (shell) is filled with plasma-forming gas or gas mixture. See, for example, column 8, lines 23-25, of Green. Green also discloses that plasma discharge occurs by application of a voltage across the micro-component. See, for example, column 8, line 58, through column 9, line 3, of Green.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the micro-component (shell) of Green corresponds to a gas discharge tube of various embodiments of the present invention. Therefore, in Green, a phosphor layer is formed in the micro-component, which might correspond to forming a phosphor layer directly in a gas discharge tube. Green does not disclose or suggest a supporting member having a phosphor layer formed thereon, or insertion of a supporting member having a phosphor layer into a gas discharge tube.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Green does not disclose or suggest a phosphor layer is formed on a supporting member that is different from a gas discharge tube, and that the supporting member having the phosphor layer formed thereon is inserted into the gas discharge tube.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

V. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-3 AND 8-10 UNDER 35 USC 103
AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER AKITA (JP 2002-117810)
IN VIEW OF PFAENDER

Akita was published on April 19, 2002.

The present application is a continuation of a PCT application claiming foreign priority to a Japanese application filed on September 14, 2001. The Japanese application filing date is before the publication date of Akita.

Therefore, the right of priority is hereby asserted, to thereby overcome Akita.

If the Examiner agrees that Akita is overcome by asserting the right of priority, the Applicants will submit a verified translation of the Japanese application, to thereby perfect the foreign priority claim.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

VI. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

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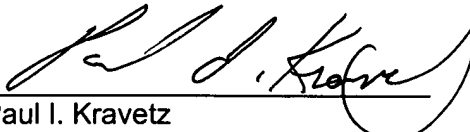
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If any further fees are required in connection with the filing of this response, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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